

Seagrave Conservation Area Character Appraisal

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This document sets out the planning policy context and how this appraisal relates to national, regional and local planning policies.

The main part of the report focuses on the assessment of the special interest of the Conservation Area:

- Location and setting describes how the Area relates to the historic village and surrounding area;
- Historic development and archaeology sets out how architecture and archaeology are related to the social and economic growth of the village;
- Spatial analysis describes the historic plan form of the village and how this has changed, the interrelationship of streets and spaces, and identifies key views and landmarks;
- Character analysis identifies the uses, types and layouts of buildings, key listed and unlisted buildings, coherent groups of buildings, distinctive building materials and architectural details, significant green spaces and trees, and detrimental features.

These elements are brought together in a summary of the special interest of the Conservation Area. An assessment of the general condition of the buildings and spaces within the Area is included.

The main issues and proposed management actions are summarised. Recommendations for developing longer term management proposals for the area are suggested.

The document is intended as a guide to people considering development which may affect the Conservation Area. It will be used by Development Control in their assessment of proposals. It may, of course, be used by residents of the Conservation Area.

Planning Policy Context

A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance should be preserved or enhanced. In making decisions on potential development within a conservation area, the Council is required to '*pay attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area*'. Permission will not be granted for proposals that are likely to harm the character or appearance of a conservation area. *Sections 69 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.*

The Department of Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement 5 on "Planning for the Historic Environment" encourages local planning authorities to pursue their duties under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to formulate proposals to preserve and enhance conservation areas and of the need to consult widely in doing so. It also contains several policies that are relevant to conserving the character of conservation areas.

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands published in March 2009 advises local authorities that the historic environment should be understood, conserved and enhanced, in recognition of its own intrinsic value. Policy 27: Regional Priorities for the Historic Environment.

Local Plan Policy EV/1- Design, seeks to ensure a high standard design of all new development and that the design should be compatible with the locality and utilises materials appropriate to the locality.

The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Leading in Design' builds on the design policies set out in the Charnwood Local Plan and will contribute to the development of more effective approaches to securing good design in the emerging Local Development Framework. The guide is also intended to support the implementation of the community strategy, Charnwood Together, by providing a set of principles that will inform the physical development implicit in the initiatives and actions of all partners in the local strategic partnership.

Other SPG/SPD guidance

- Backland & Tandem Development
- House Extensions
- Shopfronts & Signs²

ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Location and Setting

Seagrave is a village nestling in a fairly steep sided valley in the Wolds. It lies about 1 mile west of the Fosse Way and about 7 miles from Loughborough. Although many of the people now living in Seagrave work in Loughborough, Leicester and elsewhere, it was until recently a predominantly agricultural settlement being surrounded by good quality land. The Wolds are a limestone formation and the area around Seagrave is covered with a thick layer of cold, strong clay. The limestone itself, of the same quality as in Barrow upon Soar, has not been worked.

The Conservation Area encompasses the whole of the built part of the village except for a few farm outbuildings. Included in the Area are the medieval earthworks to the south of Hall Farm as well as all the green spaces, such as the cemetery, the allotments, the playing field at the top and the hay meadows at the bottom, which are integral to the village.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Origins and Development

In 1630 Robert Burton was made Rector of Seagrave. In his *Anatomy of Melancholy* he described Seagrave as “sited in a champain at the edge of the Wolds and more barren than the villages about it; yet no place likely yields a better air”.

Seagrave belongs to the system of parishes which radiate from the moot at Six Hills at the top of the Wolds. There is evidence of human activity in the area from the Stone Age and its proximity to the Fosse Way indicates that there was also Roman activity. However, the Foss was possibly constructed by the Romans on an already existing trackway. There was another trackway, called the Salt Way connecting Barrow upon Soar and Sibleby and further west with the North Sea to the east.

The settlement which we see today has its origins in a nucleated Saxon settlement, typical of the East Midlands. The village was surrounded by open fields which were divided into strips. There were three fields, Over, Milne and Nether, one for wheat or barley, one for peas and beans and one fallow. Decisions on when to sow, reap and plough were taken by common consent of the villagers, who were allocated strips in each field so that each would have a measure of the poorer and a measure of the better land. There were also meadows for the cattle and sheep and there were grazing strips amongst the arable land, variously called Hills, Plains, Wolds, Gorse, Plebbs and Walring Leys. Later, at the time of Enclosure in 1760, there were four open fields called Brinkfield, Ansleyfield, Overfield or Averfield and Netherfield, which may have been called Wichelsfield.

The documentation of Seagrave starts with the Domesday survey of 1086 where the village is called Setgrave, Satgrave or Segrave. At this time half the village was owned by the King’s manor of Rothley which in 1140 passed into the ownership of Leicester Abbey.

² While it is recognised that there are currently no shops in Seagrave, the shopfronts, such as at the corner of Church Street and King Street, remain and their design makes a significant contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

Much of the medieval history of the village is concerned with the ownership of large parts of the parish by the de Segrave family but it is no longer clear where this family lived, if indeed they did live in the village.

The present church of All Saints dates mostly from the 14th Century, with some 12th Century fabric. The Norman font is still in use.

There were changes to the village with the Black Death of the 14th Century, with the Civil War and other events but the most significant change occurred with the Enclosure Act of 1760 when, a year later, the open fields were awarded to the major landholders thus enabling more efficient farming practice by holding the land in one area rather than on the strips scattered around the village. At the same time the poorer people in the village were dispossessed. The effect of enclosure was to create a landscape of hedgerows. At least until the middle of the 20th Century there were 11 working farms within the village.

Following Enclosure the wide roads leading to the village were laid out and at the same time there were major improvements to transport in the Soar valley, first with the navigation of the Soar, followed not long after by the building of the railway. Segrave did get some benefit but the effects on the village were not pronounced.

There were several developments in the 19th Century with the establishment of the Village School and the provision of other facilities such as bakery, smithy, post office, but there is little evidence of any industry. Even for most of the 20th Century Segrave remained a small agricultural village. Piped water was not available until 1927, electricity was brought in in 1938 and mains drainage in 1965.

There has been a significant demographic change in the late 20th Century and up to the present. Agriculture requires fewer people to actually work on the land and most people now work in Loughborough, Leicester and elsewhere. At the same time rising affluence has had an effect on the quality and size of dwelling which people feel they need. There is pressure to build and the demand is for ever larger houses and increasing mobility means more traffic through the village and a corresponding loss of facilities in the village.

Archaeological Interest

Prehistoric remains within the village are limited but a Mesolithic pebble hammer has been found which indicates that there was early prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the village. There is also some evidence for Roman settlement - Roman pottery suggests an occupation site in the southern part of the village. Most recorded archaeological remains are medieval in date. To the south of the village (south of Swan Street/Butchers Lane) are various earthworks, the sites of medieval houses, the manor house, fishponds and 'hollow ways'. Further village earthworks are recorded to the north of Water Lane and to the south of King Street (the 'Village Dyke' ran alongside this road). In addition to settlement remains, a medieval deer park is recorded abutting the village to the south. There are also some medieval ridge and furrow earthworks surviving in fields around the village, reflecting the open field agriculture prior to Enclosure.

Population

Segrave has always been a small settlement. It currently has a population of about 500. In the 19th Century it was little more than 300. Earlier surveys tended to count households instead of individuals. Thus in 1563 there were 46 households and in 1670, tax was assessed against 58 hearths.

SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Plan Form

Seagrave is based on a small grid of streets, Swan Street - Butchers Lane and King Street, running parallel to each other joined across by Church Street. From this grid the roads run out to Paudy Cross Roads, Sileby and the Fosse Way with the minor Berrycott Lane to Six Hills. The village also has a good network of footpaths and green lanes connecting the village and its farmsteads to the fields around and a number of metalled lanes leading to small groups of houses and farms, Green Lane, Muckle Gate Lane, The Banks, Water Lane and Pond Street. In the twentieth century there has been a growth of culs-de-sac to accommodate small developments, starting with the council housing on Green Lane Close and continuing with The Orchard and more recently with the private roads of Hardy Court and other developments off Muckle Gate Lane.

The core of the village retains its quality as a farming community set amongst the fields from which its economy is derived. Its character and its quality are greatly determined by the large areas of green space within and around the grid of streets juxtaposed against the streets themselves which are tightly enclosed; sometimes the houses are close up against the edge of the street and sometimes there are high banks, retaining walls and mature overhanging hedges and trees. At the top of King Street and along Green Lane, the streets are bordered by green verges which are registered as common land and village green. There has been a great deal of development since the 1950s which has been fairly well accommodated by the original settlement.

The character of Green Lane is different to the rest of the village. It was until recently, it is clear, a rural lane leading to a few houses and farmsteads. The lane itself is narrow, unmarked by any white lines, without footpaths and bordered by hedges, trees and wild flowers which were allowed to grow freely. The larger farmsteads were positioned to give a sense of importance with a broad opening of green space while the workers cottages were built tightly against the edge of the lane. It is acknowledged that the original farmyards were often walled but this pattern is almost being destroyed by the building of large detached houses set in their own walled off enclosures with manicured grass and daintily grown trees. Mucklegate Lane is made ridiculous by the declaration that twenty metres before the road ends is outside the speed limit!

Interrelationship of Spaces

Seagrave is remarkable for the juxtaposition of open green spaces with tightly enclosed streets. Almost the whole of the area between King Street and Swan Street is fields and trees and there are large areas of green open space on both sides of Green Lane and on the outside of the grid of streets. The houses cling tightly to the streets although since the 1960s the tendency has been to build well back from the street.

Villagescape

The origins of Seagrave as an agricultural village can still be recognised in the layout of the buildings. Only 40 years ago there were 11 working farms within the Conservation Area:

- Home Farm - Green Lane;
- Hawley Field Farm - Green Lane;
- White House Farm - Green Lane;
- Rose Farm - Green Lane;
- Hall Farm - Pond Street;
- Manor Farm - Butchers Lane;
- Park Farm - Church Street;
- White House Farm - Corner of Church Street and King Street;
- Ivy House Farm - top end of King Street;
- Another Ivy House Farm down the bottom on King Street near to Berrycott Lane Junction;
- Dicagate Farm (otherwise known as The Firs);

Yellowgate Farm on Berrycott Lane is outside the Conservation Area and more recent.

The farmsteads occupy their own plot with the principal house and outbuildings arranged to suit the work of the farm while the smaller workers cottages are arranged along the street at the back of the pavement. Thus there is variety in the villagescape, an alternation of tight enclosure with more open aspect, which is further interspersed with undeveloped fields and paddocks. This pattern has been largely filled in through the course of the 20th century with a further mixture of small bungalows and larger detached houses. Mostly, these later developments are set back from the pavement, in some cases well back on the top of the bank with substantial front gardens and often substantial hedges and shrubs which shield the building from view. The older smaller houses are very modest in scale and they present a simple rectangular form with a simple ridge parallel to the street, though there are often substantial rear developments away from the street. The larger buildings may have a more complex shape, with a gable end fronting the street, such as The Croft, and its barn, now converted, on Swan Street and Park Farm on Church Street, where the barn and other outbuildings are parallel to Church Street and other outbuildings parallel going down Butchers Lane.

Car parking is well integrated into the street scene which has a positive effect on the character of the Area.

Key Views and Vistas

The narrow winding streets of the village offer many opportunities for views. Whether going up or down the hill there is a continually changing scene. There are corresponding views looking East out to the opposite hillside with the Fosse Way running along the ridge in the distance.

Coming from the Fosse Way there is a dramatic vista of the village nestling among the trees on the hillside across the valley of the brook, though in summertime the foliage tends to mask this view. The views are even better from the footpaths, particularly when one takes time to appreciate them and one sees the drama of the variety of roofscape interposed by the many trees and it is from here that the tower of the church is seen rising above.

Coming from Sileby or Paudy Crossroads the village is hidden from view until one rounds the sharp bend at the top of the hill. Then, from Green Lane especially, the vistas of the village in its bowl are wonderful, with the Wolds as a backdrop.

Landmarks

The tower of the church may be seen from a few places, especially from the footpath going up from King Street beside Sundial Cottage. At the other side the village school marks the entrance to the village from Sileby.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Building Types, Layouts and Uses

Farmsteads, workers cottages, council housing, only one truly large property: Seagrave Hall. More recently there are bungalows and detached houses. The trend in more recent years is for larger and larger detached houses. There are few non-domestic buildings, some barns and outbuildings related to the farms, which have mostly been converted to residential use. Otherwise the church, village school and the village hall. There are no shops left, nor a post office, though the evidence is still there in the shopfront windows, for instance at 45 King Street and No 1 Church Street.

Among the farmsteads and houses are hidden relics of the past, such as the brewhouse attached to No 54 King Street. Sometimes, the names of properties indicate former uses, such as Chapel Cottage - the Virginia creeper covered No 20 Green Lane.

Key Listed Buildings and Structures

The most important buildings in the core of the village are Seagrave Hall and All Saints Church. The former Inn on Swan St, now called Abbotsbury Court, is very prominent in the street, jutting out from the bank, painted white, and tall with three storeys. It may be one of the oldest surviving properties in the village.

The two farms, Hawley Fields Farmhouse, with Home Farm behind it, terminate the view at the end of Green Lane.

Key Unlisted Buildings

Seagrave School at the top of the hill is an important landmark at the entrance to the village.

Coherent groups

The run of buildings, from the former shop at the corner of Church Street to No 41 King Street is a significant group.

Building Materials and Architectural Details

Walls

The normal construction is a soft red brick with lime mortar, sometimes laid to Flemish bond with the pattern of alternating header and stretcher. Many of the bricks were fired from clay dug from pits around the village. In the older buildings, the walls sit on a plinth of granite and field stone. It is surprising to find so much granite in this Wolds village at a fair distance from the source of the stone in the Forest on the other side of the Soar valley but it is used also for many of the retaining walls against the high banks. And the church is built of granite with the quoins, especially of the tower, in ashlar.

Not uncommonly walls are painted white or rendered and painted. The Victorians introduced dark blue brick as decoration. In the 20th century and later, as the soft red brick became unobtainable, and the lime mortar was replaced by the harder cement mortar, there are examples of buff brick, and latterly of a much deeper red brick or a mottle of pink and grey brick.

Roofs

There is a variety of roofing material, Swithland Slate, red clay pantile, plain clay tile and Welsh slate. No one material is dominant though the use of red pantile is a common feature of the Wolds villages. There are also grey pantiles and grey plain tile. Some houses have been re-roofed with concrete tile.

Doors and Windows

Windows are of white painted timber, sash windows in the more expensive properties, horizontal sliding sash and casements in the cottages. Unfortunately there are many properties where windows have been replaced with uPVC double glazing. These plastic windows have neither style nor charm and they do no justice to the character of the village. The cumulative effect of these replacement windows has done great damage to the Conservation Area.

Doors are simple without decoration, canopy or doorcase. There are a few stone or brick porches. However, recently there has been a fashion to introduce porches, gables and dormers, possibly in

the mistaken idea that this constitutes a rustic character, but such features are not historically part of the character of Seagrave.

Street Lighting

Seagrave Parish Council have taken great care to ensure that the level of street lighting in the village is kept to a minimum, thus preserving the quality of a rural village and adhering to the recommendations of the National Dark Skies Campaign.

Parks, Gardens and Trees

Seagrave is astonishing for the extent of open, though not necessarily accessible, green space. At the top of the hill is the village green, which slopes down into King Street. In the centre of the green is an important chestnut tree on the site of the old Pinfold. Closely associated with the Green are the broad verges which extend along Green Lane, the allotment gardens, the playing field on the other side of the road and the cemetery. Most of these green spaces are registered common land and thus protected from any development, including the forming of driveways across the verges.

In the centre of the village is a large expanse of meadow with many trees and lower down the hill there is the hay meadow at the start of the village. Outside the built area is the site of the medieval village, with fish ponds, and other evidence of settlement.

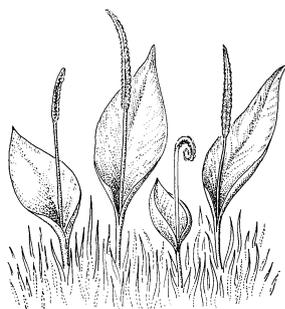
Significant parts of Butchers Lane and Swan Street are bordered by trees and hedges. Throughout the village there are grass verges and grassy banks, especially Green Lane, the top of Swan Street and the east end of King Street.

At the bottom of the village behind Sundial Cottage rising up from King Street is a fine area of parkland with many large trees, walnut, sweet chestnut, lime and predominantly beech. Many of these trees were planted by a former rector. Some of them have been lost to drought in recent years. The field is traversed by a footpath which gives fine views over the village.

Biodiversity

The Conservation Area is closely surrounded by high quality habitats and attractive countryside. It comprises part of a Local Wildlife Site along its mid-northern boundary. High Tor Fields has been notified for its species-rich grassland with lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, black knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* and many meadow flowers.

Other Local Wildlife Sites, such as Fields off Berrycott Lane and Hall Farm, are in close proximity to the Area, to the east and south, and contain rich assemblages of flowering plants typical of old unimproved meadows.

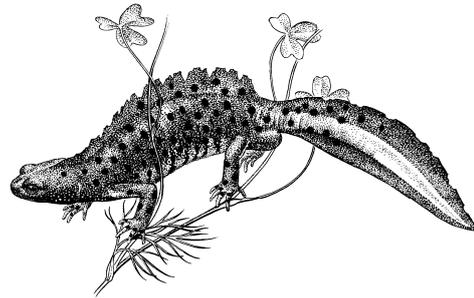


Along Park Hill Verges – another Local Wildlife Site adjacent to the south-east corner of the Conservation Area – one can still come across species which once used to be common in the countryside but have now seriously declined, such as cowslip *Primula veris*, agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria*, bulbous buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus* and adder's-tongue fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum*.

Roadside verges form a valuable resource bringing the countryside into the heart of the Conservation Area. Wild flowers, such a cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*, garlic mustard *Alliaria petiolata*, wood avens *Geum*

urbanum and herb-robert *Geranium robertianum*, provide sources of nectar and pollen to many invertebrates. However, the introduction of non-native ornamental species can displace the native flora and detract from the natural environment.

The countryside in Seagrave comprises a good network of ponds with amphibians, including the great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*. The pond network extends to the Conservation Area, and it is possible that some of the ponds still support this UK Biodiversity Action Plan species. The great crested newt spends most of its life cycle on quality terrestrial habitats, only returning to ponds to breed.



The Area still retains some grassland fields bounded by free-growing hedgerows. Uninterrupted native hedgerows contribute to the rich local biodiversity network. They extend to the surrounding countryside and connect the range of wildlife habitats within the Area and beyond. They also function as commuting highways for many species, such as the common pipistrelle bat *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* which is known to roost in several dwellings within the Conservation Area.

Sibley Brook flows from the higher grounds of the Wolds through the Conservation Area towards the River Soar. The tree-lined watercourse forms another important biodiversity link with the surrounding countryside. Mobile species such as the otter *Lutra lutra* and water vole *Arvicola terrestris* have been recorded close by and are likely to travel through the Conservation Area. Both are UK Biodiversity Action Plan species and the water vole is also a priority species in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

Lowland meadows, ponds and hedgerows are all listed as UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats. The rich mosaic of habitats within the Conservation Area and in its vicinity enables wildlife to flourish and be an integral part of the life of the parish.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST

The main contributions to the special character of Seagrave Conservation Area are:

- Location in the Wolds nestling in the steep narrow valley
- Superb views of the village in its bowl especially from the footpaths
- Inclusion within the Area of medieval earthworks
- Quiet streets, particularly King Street, Church Street and Green Lane
- Variety of farmsteads and modest cottages
- Extent of open green space between King Street and Swan Street and all around the village
- Juxtaposition of the houses with the green space
- Minimum street lighting to preserve the rural quality and protect the night sky
- Green verges, which are registered common land

MANAGEMENT PLAN

General Principles

Any proposed changes should be carried out in a sensitive manner, taking into account the established character. New development must respond to its immediate environment i.e. its context, in terms of scale, form, materials and detailing. Otherwise, alterations will have a detrimental effect on the historic and locally distinctive form of the village.

Within the Conservation Area, where the quality of the general environment is already considered to be high, the Council will insist on good quality schemes which respond positively to their historic setting, this extends to small buildings such as garages and even boundary walls and fences. Minor alterations need to be carefully considered as incremental change can have a significant detrimental effect on the character of an area over a period of time.

Central government guidance contained in PPS1 and PPS5, Borough of Charnwood Local Plan, Leading in Design and other Supplementary Planning Documents will be used to assess the quality of proposal for new development.

The character of the Conservation Area identified in the appraisal above is such that the following general principles should be noted when considering any development in all parts of the Conservation Area:

1. The Conservation Area has a distinct “grain” or pattern of built form and spaces which are part of its historic development. This gives the Conservation Area great individuality, characterised by the pattern of historic buildings, ancient footpaths and highways and clearly defined boundaries. This “grain” is an important part of the character of the Conservation Area and will be protected.
2. The emphasis for new proposals will be on high quality of design. There may be opportunity for innovative modern design. However a dramatic contemporary statement is unlikely to be appropriate. Good modern design can be used to create positive changes in historic settlements
3. Scale is the combination of a building’s height and bulk when related to its surroundings. Proposed new development must take into account the scale of the existing buildings, and must not dominate or overwhelm them.
4. Alterations and extensions must respect the form of the original building and its locality. The use of high quality materials and detailing, whether modern or traditional is essential. Roof lines, roof shape, eaves details, verge details and the creation of new chimneys are important considerations.
5. Windows and doors of a traditional design respect the historic nature of the buildings to which they belong and make a very important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The use of upvc and standardised high speed joinery techniques nearly always leads to unsuitably detailed windows which will be generally unacceptable in the Conservation Area. In most cases the building regulation requirements can be met without the need to use clumsy and awkwardly detailed windows.
6. The appraisal has identified the types of materials that characterise the Conservation Area and where possible this should be used to help alterations respect that established character.
7. Applicants for planning permission must provide a meaningful “Design & Access Statement”, to explain the design decisions that have been made and to show how proposed alterations

relate to their context. A detailed analysis of the locality should demonstrate that there is a full appreciation of the local streetscape and how it has developed, including prevailing building forms, materials and plot ratios.

Procedures to Ensure Consistent Decision-Making

The basis of the character appraisal is to inform and guide development control decisions. A consistent approach to decision making will be aided by providing:

- Conservation and design surgeries to help development control officers to make informed decisions, no matter how minor the proposed changes.
- Opportunities for pre-application discussion regarding significant alterations.
- Opportunities to review decisions and assess the impact of approved alterations through post development site visits.

Enforcement Strategy

Effective enforcement is vital to make sure there is public confidence in the planning system to protect the special character of the area. Unauthorised development can often be damaging to that character.

Taking proactive action can improve the appearance and character of the area, making it more attractive and in some instances increasing the potential for investment. Effective monitoring of building work to make sure it is carried out in accordance with the approved details and with planning conditions ensures new development makes the positive contribution envisaged when permission was granted.

In order to protect the character of the Conservation Area the Borough Council will seek to:

- use enforcement powers in cases where unauthorised development unacceptably affects the character of the Conservation Area.
- take proactive action to improve or enhance the appearance of the Area.
- monitor development under way to make sure it fully complies with the terms of any planning permission or listed building consent.

Carrying out unauthorised work to a listed building or to protected trees and hedgerows or the unauthorised demolition of a building within a conservation area is an offence. In such cases, the Council will consider prosecution of anyone responsible and any necessary remedial action.

The powers set out in Section 215 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 will be used where sites are identified as detracting from the character of the Conservation Area by being eyesores or untidy.

Article 4 Direction

The quality of a conservation area is often threatened by the cumulative impact of numerous small changes to many buildings. Terraces that once displayed integrity of design through the use of matching features such as doors, window, chimneys and porches, have been unbalanced by various alterations and additions. On the whole such changes do not require planning permission.

In order to preserve and enhance the character of conservation areas, many planning authorities use Article 4 Directions to restrict permitted development rights on groups of buildings or areas. Restrictions normally relate to particular elements such as replacement windows and doors, or roofing.

It is not considered appropriate at this time to impose such a direction.

General Condition

The core of the village which is wholly within the Conservation Area is in a reasonable condition. There has been some loss of character, particularly through the replacement of timber windows with uPVC.

However, beyond the core, Green Lane and its associated spur roads is in danger of losing its character. Until recently it was a rural lane of farmsteads and cottages. It is now being developed with substantial detached housing.

Buildings at Risk

It is the intent of the Borough Council to take necessary action to secure repair & full use of any buildings at risk. The appraisal has not identified any such buildings.

Review of the Conservation Area Boundary

The present boundaries of the existing Conservation Area incorporate the whole of the area of special historic and architectural interest within the village. The appraisal has not identified any need to change the boundary.

Possible Buildings for Spot Listing

In carrying out the Appraisal none of the buildings within the Conservation Area were identified for spot listing, i.e. considered for inclusion on the list of statutory listed buildings.

Proposals for Economic Development and Regeneration

Historic building grants are available from both Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council. Repair and reinstatement works to historic buildings, that make a vital contribution to maintaining and improving the character of the Conservation Area may be eligible for grant assistance.

Management and Protection of Trees and Biodiversity

Threatened species and habitats can be protected by wildlife legislation. Where protected species may be present, appropriate surveys and assessments should be carried out to ensure that development or management proposals will not have a detrimental effect.

The Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan sets out the Borough Council's priorities for conservation of a variety of habitats and species within Charnwood and details the actions required to bring about a reversal in their decline. Not only should habitats and species of principal importance be retained and protected, but opportunities maximised to restore or enhance such habitats and populations.

The trees in the parkland behind Sundial Cottage are a valuable asset to the Conservation Area. New trees need to be planted every so often to replace those which have died or are reaching the end of their lives.

Monitoring Change

It is planned to review the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and its Management Plan every five years, although the Management Plan may under certain circumstances need to be reviewed over a shorter time period. A photographic record of the Conservation Area has been made and

will be used to help identify the need to review how changes within the Conservation Area are managed. A greater degree of protection will be accomplished if the local community help monitor any changes.

Consideration of Resources

This management plan sets out the commitment of the Borough Council to protecting the character and appearance of Charnwood's conservation areas and how it will use its resources to achieve these aims.

Summary of Issues and Proposed Actions

Conservation Area Issue	Proposed Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners
Intrusive overhead wires	Encourage the laying of electricity and telephone wires and cables underground.	Utility Companies	Charnwood BC & Seagrave PC
Intrusive highway signage	Encourage an audit of street signs to determine whether they are necessary.	Leicestershire CC Highways	Charnwood BC & Seagrave PC

Developing Management Proposals

Various forces, historical, cultural and commercial, have shaped the development of the conservation area, creating a sense of place and individual identity. The character and appearance of the Conservation Area is vitally important, both in attracting investment in the area itself, and in the encouragement of initiatives to the benefit of the wider community.

Based on the issues that have been identified the following objectives will have a positive impact in both protecting and enhancing the character of the Conservation Area, and provide the basis of a long term management plan:

1. Review how the Council's adopted 'Shopfronts & Signs' guidance is working.
2. A policy regarding the co-ordination of the placing of all permanent items within the streets needs to be formulated. The opportunities to renew, redesign, re-site, eliminate or combine existing street furniture are substantial. Similarly there is a need to look at traffic signs and highway markings with a view to their rationalisation. The existing low level of street lighting makes a significant contribution to the character of the Area and any proposed changes would need very careful consideration.
3. The production of heritage trail leaflets to increase community awareness and appreciation, including the encouragement of tourism, should be considered. This might involve interpretation material, plaques or similar for key sites and buildings.

Community Involvement

This document was made available as a draft via the website prior to submission to Cabinet for adoption. A public meeting was held in Seagrave so that local residents could contribute their ideas for enhancement and preservation of the Conservation Area. All comments and responses have been considered and appropriate amendments made to the document prior to submission to Cabinet.

Advice and Guidance

The Borough Council Development Department can advise on the need for Planning Permission or Listed Building Consent and can provide guidance on matters such as appropriate methods of maintenance/repairs, changes to shopfronts, alterations and extensions and suitable materials.

Contacts: Conservation & Landscape Team
 Tel. 01509 634748
 built.heritage@charnwood.gov.uk

 Development Control
 Tel. 01509 634691
 Development.control@charnwood.gov.uk

 Planning Enforcement
 Tel. 01509 634722
 Development.control@charnwood.gov.uk

Bibliography

Seagrave Parish Plan, Seagrave Parich Council 2003
Seagrave Village Plan, Charnwood Borough Council 1979
Seagrave by Stanley Hincks 1993
John Nichols, "History and Antiquities of the County of Leicestershire", Vol 3, 1800
Guidance on conservation area appraisals, English Heritage, 2006
Guidance on the management of conservation areas, English Heritage, 2006

Internet Resources

<http://www.leicestershirevillages.com/seagrave> (accessed 11 August 2009)
This website contains an excellent and comprehensive history of Seagrave by Robert Hill

Acknowledgements

Many thanks:
To John and Lesley Tyers for their wealth of knowledge about the village;
To Cynthia Spence for her introduction to many hidden corners of the village;
To John Hardy for his fascinating collection of artefacts from the agricultural past of the village.

Statutory Listed Buildings in Seagrave

All Listed Grade II except the Church which is listed Grade II*

Church of All Saints, Church Street
No 2 Church Street
Park Farmhouse, No 8 Church Street
Barn & outbuildings at Nos 12 & 14 Church Street
No 58 Green Lane
Hawley Fields Farmhouse, No 60 Green Lane
Home Farmhouse, No 62 Green Lane
Whitehouse Farmhouse, No 63 Green Lane
No 5 King Street
Ivy House Farmhouse, No 19 King Street
No 29 King Street
No 45 King Street
Dovecote at The Firs, No 50 King Street
Seagrave Hall, No 83 King Street
Outbuildings at Seagrave Hall
The Croft, No 26 Swan Street
Barn approx 20m west of The Croft
Abbotsbury Court, No 31 Swan Street
No 45 Swan Street
No 7 The Banks